REMARKS

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the preceding amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 22-37 are presented for consideration in lieu of claims 1-21, which have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 22, 28 and 36 are independent. Claims 22-37 have been added to recite additional features of the subject invention. Support for these claims can be found in the original application, as filed. Therefore, no new matter has been added.

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action.

Claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. The Examiner objected to a specific recitation in this claim. Claim 12 having been canceled, this rejection has become moot and should be withdrawn. Nevertheless, the Examiner's comments were taken into consideration when presenting new claims 22-37. Accordingly, Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Turning now to the art rejections, claims 1-6, 9, 11-14 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Applicant's background statement in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,006,760 to Drake et al. Claims 7, 8, 10 and 15-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable based on that art combination and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,856,904 to Akagawa. Applicant submits that the cited art, whether taken individually or in combination, does not teach many features of the present invention as previously recited in claims 1-21. Therefore, these rejections are respectfully traversed.

Nevertheless, Applicant submits that claims 22-37, as presented, amplify the distinctions between the present invention and the cited art.

In one aspect of the invention, independent claim 22 recites a pod, which has walls and a lid for an opening formed by the walls, and is capable of including a substrate. The pod includes an electromagnetic shield member provided by the walls and a flange provided around the opening, which is to contact an electromagnetic-shielded chamber for processing the substrate, at a portion around an opening covered with a lid of the electromagnetic-shielded chamber, and causes the electromagnetic shield member to be grounded through the electromagnetic-shielded chamber.

In another aspect of the invention, independent claim 28 recites a micro-device manufacturing apparatus using a substrate. The apparatus includes an electromagnetic-shielded chamber having an opening covered with a door, a door opener which opens the door, a processing system, contained in the electromagnetic-shielded chamber, which processes the substrate and a stand which mounts a pod. The pod includes those features discussed above with respect to independent claim 22.

In yet another aspect of the invention, independent claim 36 recites a micro-device manufacturing method using a substrate, the method includes a step of providing a micro-device manufacturing apparatus using a substrate, which comprises (i) an electromagnetic-shielded chamber having an opening covered with a door, (ii) a door opener which opens the door, (iii) a processing system, contained in the electromagnetic-shielded chamber, which processes the substrate and (iv) a stand which mounts a pod. The method also includes steps of providing the pod, which includes those features discussed above with

respect to independent claim 22, installing the pod on the stand of the micro-device manufacturing apparatus, opening both the door of the micro-device manufacturing apparatus and the lid of the pod, transferring the substrate in the pod to the processing system and processing the substrate with the processing system.

Applicant submits that the cited art, whether taken individually or in combination, does not teach or suggest such features of the present invention as recited in independent claims 22, 28 and 36.

Applicant's background statement has been cited as disclosing a cassette holding plural wafers and a pod providing an inner space to store the cassette. Applicant's background statement may teach the use of a pod that is attached to a chamber to isolate wafers in the pod from an outside "clean room" environment and micro-device manufacturing apparatuses that are covered with shielded metal chambers. In Applicant's background statement, however, there is no suggestion of any electromagnetic shielding in the manner of the present invention recited in the independent claims. Applicant submits, therefore, that his background statement teaches nothing regarding the salient features of Applicant's present invention as recited in the independent claims, including at least the arrangement of the electromagnetic shield member and the flange provided around the opening of the pod, which is to contact the electromagnetic-shielded chamber for processing the substrate.

Applicant further submits that the remaining art cited does not cure the deficiencies noted above with respect to Applicant's background statement.

In particular, Applicant submits that in the Drake et al. patent, what should be compared to the electromagnetic-shielded chamber of the present invention would be the entirety of the plasma reactor having an enclosed volume in which plasma is generated. Applicant submits, however, that the Drake et al. patent likewise does not teach or suggest at least the arrangement of the electromagnetic shield member and the flange provided around the opening of the pod, which is to contact an electromagnetic-shielded chamber for processing the substrate, at a portion around an opening covered with the lid of the electromagnetic-shielded chamber, in the manner of the present invention recited in the independent claims.

The Akagawa patent discloses an arrangement of two inspection units in which electromagnetic shield members may be provided at entrances to the inspection units to reduce the influence to one of the inspection units of electromagnetic noise generated in the other inspection unit. As discussed in the Akagawa patent at column 6, lines 66-68, "the use of such shield members is desirable, therefore, in case considerable electromagnetic influence is anticipated between inspection units." Applicant submits, therefore, that the Akagawa patent merely teaches inserting electromagnetic shields between left and right inspection units of a wafer inspection apparatus to prevent electromagnetic radiation of one inspection unit from entering the other.

Applicant submits, however, that the Akagawa patent, as with the remaining art, does not teach or suggest the salient features of Applicant's present invention as recited in the independent claims, which have been discussed above.

Accordingly, Applicant further submits that neither the Drake et al. patent nor the Akagawa patent adds anything to the teachings of Applicant's background statement that would render obvious Applicant's present invention as recited in the independent claims.

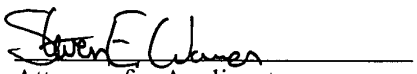
For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that the present invention, as recited in independent claims 22, 28 and 36, is patentably defined over the cited art, whether that art is taken individually or in combination.

Dependent claims 23-27, 29-35 and 37 also should be deemed allowable, in their own right, for defining other patentable features of the present invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims. Further individual consideration of these dependent claims is requested.

Applicant further submits that the instant application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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